

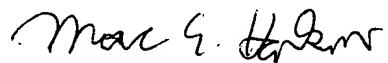
Remarkably, now, after several rounds of Office Actions, and after **more than five years of pendency**, the Patent Office has sent out an Election/Restriction Requirement. Frankly, this Requirement is not well-taken, and the case is in condition for allowance. There does not seem to be any good faith reason for an Election/Restriction Requirement to be sent out after **more than five years of pendency and substantive examination on the merits**.

If an Election needs to be made, then Applicants elect Invention I.

CONCLUSION

In view of the remarks made above, it is respectfully submitted that all of the pending claims are now in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully solicited. Should the Examiner not agree, then Applicants respectfully request a telephone interview to discuss the matter with the Examiner.

Respectfully submitted,



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